PERFINS OF THE "PRU" - A task for us all.   By Tony Llewellyn-Edwards.

One of the problems of the usual article on perfins is that the beginner often does not have a sufficient number of the perfin type under discussion to be able to help or join in with a search for new information. This caused me to think of a task that any member of the Society could join in. The perfins of the Prudential Assurance Company are very common so a task involving them is one in which all members could help. This article is the start of a study of the perfins of this company and all members may join in. Everyone should have perfins of the 'PRU' so even the newest member can add something.

Another purpose of this article is to show how perfin collecting can be changed from the accumulation of perfins to a specialised study of a particular perfin.

The 'Pru' has used perfins for a very long time. They were amongst the first to use perfins and may still be using them. This brings us to the first part of the task. What is the date of the earliest perfin use and what was the last? I have a 'Pru' perfin on the ½d Victorian Jubilee issue (SG 213) and on the 1d lilac (SG172) so this puts the first use about 1900. Can anyone find an earlier issue perfinned or an example with a dated post-mark? As for the latest use I have an envelope with a perfinned stamp dated 1985 - does anyone know of a later usage? Are these stamps still in use?

The next stage is to consult the catalogues. The Edwards Catalogue for P has not yet been published so we must turn to the earlier catalogues, Tilles and van Lint. The former shows eight perfins of the type PAC all identified with the 'Pru' (see Fig. l) and the latter shows six, two of which are new (see Fig. 2). Thus we have our basic collection of perfin types. There are two further perfins associated with this company in the form P/A/C one in each catalogue (see Fig. 3)

PAC PAC PAC PAC

0120.01   0120.01a   0120.02   0120.03

PAC PAC PAC PAC

0120.03a   0120.03c   0120.03b   0120.04

Figure 1
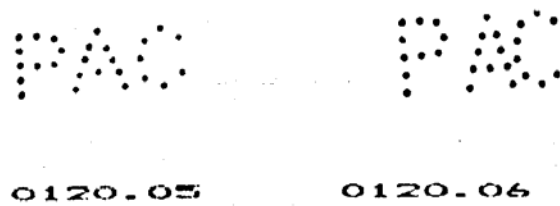
PAC   PAC

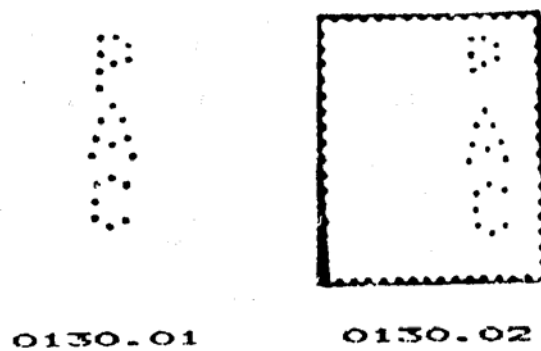0120.05   0120.06

Figure 2

0130.01   0130.02

Figure 3

Now it is time to look at our collections. Two tasks are necessary. The first is to assign all the perfins we have to the type number shown in the catalogue. (Here I should point out that I am using the new Edwards Cat. numbers, but of course you can use any numbering system which suits you.) In doing this you will find (if you are lucky) that you have some uncatalogued types. Put these to one side. The second task is to lay out all the perfins you have in date order (using cat. nos. or postmark dates. You should then be able to assign a period of use to each type of perfin. If one seems to have been used a long way away from the main usage of the type have a careful look at it as it may be of a different type to the one you first assigned. I did this to my collection and the results are as follows:-

0120.01   ... KGV (photogravure)
0120.01a ..... KGVI (new colours)
0120.02   ... QV (Jubilee) to KGV (Typographed)
0120.05   .... KGV (photogravure) to KEVIII
0120.03a ..... KGV (photogravure)
0120,03b .... KEVIII
0120.03c .... Nil return
0120.04 ..... KGV (photogravure) to KGVI
0120.05   .... Nil return
0120.06   .... Nil return
0130.01 .... Nil return
0130.02 .... Nil return

No doubt you can extend these ranges - look at your collection to see if you can.

Now for the new designs.   These should be treated in the same way as the known designs but a good example of each (or photostat of back) should be sent to the catalogue editor for inclusion in the catalogue.   In my collection I found the following new designs. (See Fig.4)

0120.08 ...... QV (Jubilee)

0120.09 ...... KEVII to KGV (typograph)

0120.10 ...... QEII

0120.11 ...... KGV1 (High Value)

0130.03 ...... KGVI (Dark colours)

No doubt you can extend these ranges and add some more new designs. Try it.

Part Two next Bulletin.

0120.08   0120.09   0130.03

0120.11   0120.10   Figure 4